THE

Bishop of SALISBURY'S

SERMON

Preached at

BOW-CHURCH,

ON THE

FAST-DAY.

MARCH 12. 16$\frac{11}{12}$.

PILKINGTON Mayor.

Martis xviii°. *Martii* 16$\frac{89}{90}$. *Annoque Regni Regis & Reginæ* Willielmi & Mariæ, Angliæ, &c. *Secundo.*

THIS Court doth desire the Right Reverend Father in God, the Lord Bishop of *Sarum*, to Print his Sermon Preached at St. *Mary le Bow*, on *Wednesday* the 12*th* Instant, before the Aldermen and Citizens of this City.

Wagstaffe.

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A

SERMON

Preached at

BOW-CHURCH,

Before the

Court of Aldermen,

On *March* 12. $16\frac{89}{90}$.

BIBL. CANT. ACAD.

Being the

FAST-DAY

Appointed by

Their MAJESTIES.

By the Right Reverend Father in God, *GILBERT* Lord Biſhop of SARUM.

LONDON:
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LUKE xix. 41, 42.

And when he was come near, he beheld the City, and wept over it,
Saying, If thou hadſt known, even thou, at leaſt in this thy day, the things which concern thy peace.

OBJECTS that raiſe Compaſſion, and beget Sorrow, cannot be look'd on with indifferent eyes by thoſe who have a right Proſpect, and a juſt Senſe of things. To an ordinary Spectator, *Jeruſalem* muſt have appeared one of the Glories of the World, eſpecially as it was beautified and fortified by *Herod.* Its Temple ſtanding on an Eminence, was ſo Auguſt in it Self, and ſo Sacred in its Uſe, as being dedicated to the Service of the Living God, that the very ſight of it muſt have begot a Reverence; and to a born *Jew* muſt have given all the Pride which the Native of any Countrey may be apt to feel in himſelf, when he ſees the Capital City full both of People and of Wealth, ſhining with a freſh Luſtre, and adorned with all the Beauties of Art, as well as hallowed by the ſpecial marks of the Favour and Preſence of God.

But all this muſt have appeared as a vain Pageant to one that could ſee through that falſe varniſh, and that likewiſe by reaſon of the treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledg that were in him, ſaw their approaching Fate; he ſaw that Miſery, which tho it

fell not on them till almoſt Forty Years after this yet did then to him repreſent *Jeruſalem* as a heap of Stones, the Temple on Fire, and the Inhabitants deſtroyed by Famine, or by the Sword; nor could ſo Divine a Mind find any eaſe in ſo diſmal a proſpect, from this, That the *Jews* rejecting of him, and the cruel Treatment that he was to reeeive from them, was to be revenged in ſo terrible a manner. This to a ſpiteful mind would have afforded ſome content; but he that was ſo full of Univerſal Love and Goodneſs, could not entertain ſuch ill-natur'd thoughts. Nor could, on the other hand, all the Glory to which he himſelf was to be advanced long before the effuſion of the Wrath of God upon this City, make him leſs ſenſible of this Miſery, becauſe neither he nor his Followers were to ſhare in it. It was true Pity and Compaſſion that were his Motives, which both drew tears from his eyes, and alſo the ſad wiſh that follows. His ſenſe of their ſins was from the ſame pure and diſintereſſed Motives, for he had none of his own to return into his mind, when he conſidered theirs, to make the Sorrow more melting. And tho that bloody Scene which he himſelf was ſo ſoon to go through, might, according to ſuch meaſures as we act by, have ſo entirely poſſeſſed his thoughts, that no room ſhould have been left for the compaſſionating others; yet even in this nearneſs to that bitter Cup which he was ſo ſoon to drink, he conſidered their miſeries that were more remote, with all the tenderneſſes of hearty Sorrow and Compaſſion.

In imitation then of the Author of our Faith, it does much more become us to look on this great City that has riſen out of

of its aſhes with ſo much Glory, that is now the Treaſure as well as the Pride of the Nation, that has ſo many characters of Greatneſs, as well as Wealth in every corner of it; but that at the ſame time has contracted ſo much guilt, is covered with ſo much Defilement, Luxury, and Exceſs; is agitated with ſuch Factions, and theſe acted with ſo much animoſity; but not to view all this without feeling a tenderneſs run through all our Powers, and give us many ſad and melting thoughts, which ought to affect us ſo much the more ſenſibly, when we find how great a ſhare we our ſelves have in theſe ſins, which we lament in others; ſo that the Words of our Saviour, *Weep not for me, but weep for your ſelves*, may be applied to us in another ſenſe, ſince upon ſtrict enquiry, we ſhall find that we are not pure enough our ſelves, to be capable of ſuch a diſintereſſed ſorrow, while we weep over *London*: We muſt firſt begin and lament our ſelves, while we remember in how many places of this City, and in how many ſeveral ways we have diſhonoured God, and contributed our proportion towards the kindling the Wrath of God againſt us. Our melancholly thoughts alſo muſt have another mixture in them, ſince if this place is to be made as great a ſcene of the Judgments of God, as it has been hitherto of his Mercies, we muſt be all involved in it. This thought does indeed render our Compaſſion for the Publick, leſs generous; but it will perhaps make it more ſenſible to us. In a word, as there is nothing that ſhews that a man has truly repented of his own ſins, more than a tender ſenſe of the Wrath of God; ſo nothing proves a man to be poſſeſſed with a ſpirit of Love and Charity, more than a feeling ſenſe of

23 Luk. 28

of the ſins and miſeries of others; and to weep over ones Countrey or City, as it is the moſt important ſervice that can be done the Publick, which may delay, if not quite divert the Judgments of God; ſo this is that which is in every ones Power to do: Wealth is not neceſſary for this aid; yet perhaps there is ſcarce any one duty that is more univerſally neglected, than this is; ill men do not ſo much as once think of it; men of a low degree of Goodneſs, have not elevation of ſoul enough for it; and the only men that are capable of doing this ſervice to their Countrey, have ſo much Modeſty and Humility, and are ſo depreſſed with the ſenſe of their own ſins, that they are tempted to think it is an over valuing themſelves, and a ſort of a Preſumption for them to intercede for others, or for their Countrey.

But we are Members of one Political Body, and muſt all bear a ſhare in the Proſperity, or the Misfortunes of the Nation; ſo that if a nobler Principle does not engage us to this Duty, yet at leaſt Self-love ſhould work on us; ſince we cannot flatter our ſelves ſo far, as to fancy, that if any general Calamity ſhould overtake the Land, or City, that we our ſelves ſhould be exempted from it. We are alſo joined into a nearer Relation as we are become Members of one Body, of which Chriſt is the Head; and by this Union the ſame Spirit of Love and Charity will be ſpread over the whole Body; ſo that we will *rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.* Since then the preſent ſtate of things, and the Commands of Authority, our common Intereſts, as well as our Chriſtian Charity, do all concur to engage us, firſt of all to weep for

for our ſins, and then to look over our Countrey, and this *the City of our Solemnities*, and mourn over them; let us go over the ſeveral branches of the moving and emphatical words of our Saviour, and apply them as far as the parallel goes, to the preſent ſtate of things: in which let us conſider,

1. The Importance of this redoubling the word, *thou, even thou.*

2. The Importance of theſe words, *at leaſt in this thy day.*

3. What are *the things that concern the peace* of a Nation, and how they may be known.

And 4*thly*, what are the happy effects of a Nation's knowing them: This, tho not expreſſed, yet is implied in the wiſh in which the period is laid, without being regularly cloſed.

I have not read the laſt words of this Verſe, neither will I ſpeak to them, for they might ſeem to carry too diſmal a ſound with them; yet, I hope, all that hear me, will ſo ſeriouſly reflect on them, that by their ſo doing, they may come not to belong to us. For though perhaps in the preſent unhappy poſture in which we are, it is but too true that *now they are hid from our eyes*; yet if we will ſeriouſly attend to thoſe things of which I am to treat, then we ſhall be delivered from ſo heavy a Sentence as is imported in them. To return.

1. *If thou, even thou*; the words carry plainly a weight in them, which to comprehend aright, we muſt conſider the ſtate in which *Jeruſalem* was at that time, and that with reſpect to both the good and bad of it. It was the Capital of that Nation, that God had choſen out of all the Families of the Earth to be his own Inheritance: it was the place where his Name was called upon, and to which the

Worſhip of God was appropriated. It was now ſo enriched by *Herod*, who having heaped up Treaſures like another *Solomon*, had laid them out in the rebuilding the Temple, which in a courſe of 46 years was carried on to ſo vaſt a Magnificence, that it was become indeed one of the Wonders of the World: It was alſo ſo well fortified, and had within it ſuch a number of Inhabitants, who had ſuch a violent love to their Countrey, and ſo much zeal for it, that one might have thought they were in no danger of being beſieged; but that they were ſtrong enough to have gone out and fought any Enemy that could have gone againſt them: and that no Siege could have ſignified any thing, but to have ruined the Army that ſhould have attempted it: ſo that by this *thou, even thou*, in one view we may underſtand a City dedicated to God, and under his Protection; a City well fortified, full of Wealth, and full of People, and yet to ſuch a City it was neceſſary to *know the things that belonged to their peace.*

Here, before we go farther, Reflections offer themſelves to us in abundance: This our City has been under ſignal Characters of the Protection of God; it has been preſerved from violent Concuſſions, and from the hand of an Enemy, when all the reſt of the Nation has had their turns in the Accidents of War: It is true, two ſignal ſtrokes from Heaven that came one after another, a waſting Peſtilence, and a devouring Fire that ſeemed to threaten it with ruine, ſhewed that God corrected them, tho he would not deliver them over to the will of their Enemies; The quick recovery of the City, carries the marks of a particular care of Heaven; and the haſte that has been made to raiſe up ſo many of theſe holy and beautiful Houſes, in which God is worſhipped, may be

be reckoned among the Glories, and the Defences of this place. Its vaſt Wealth, the increaſe of the Inhabitants, the prodigious extent of it, and the zeal with which all ſeem to be heated for preſerving the Honour of the City, bring us ſo near a Parallel to *Jeruſalem*, that in this, *thou, even thou*, we may find the Characters of a City, hitherto highly bleſſed of God, and full of the Good things of this life; yet in the midſt of all this Wealth, and Abundance, there is great need of preparing for a Storm.

2*dly*, If we conſider the ſtate of *Jeruſalem* with relation to Religion; the *Jews* who had ſhewed ſo violent an Inclination to Idolatry before they were carried Captives to *Babylon*, were there ſo abſolutely cured of that, that ever after they expreſſed the ſtricteſt Zeal poſſible againſt every ſtep towards Idolatry, or the leaſt appearance of it. We ſee how they reſiſted the Kings of *Syria* in their Attempts for profaning the Temple, and defiling their Worſhip: and not long after our Saviour's death, when *Caligula* ordered his Statue to be ſet up in the Temple, they were all in ſo great a commotion upon it, that an Embaſſy was ſent to him, to ſhew that they could not bear any thing that looked like a departure from the God of their Fathers, which was urged by *Philo* that went on the Embaſſy, in terms full of zeal, that expreſſed a firm reſolution of ſuffering every thing, rather than endure ſuch an affront to be done to their Religion. To this Zeal againſt Idolatry, they added a moſt punctual obſervation of all the Rituals of their Religion; and not ſatisfied with thoſe which *Moſes* had appointed, they had added many new ones, which they reckoned the *ſetting a hedge about the Law*; ſecuring the obſervance of the commanded Rites by thoſe, which, according to the

Tradition of the Elders, had been for ſome Ages obſerved among them; ſo here was a City that was both free from Idolatry, and exact in obeying the Laws of God, that yet is warned of a great danger in theſe words, *Thou, even thou.* I do not know whether our conformity to them, as to theſe particulars, goes ſo high, or is ſo Univerſal, yet ſomething like it we have. Great Zeal has appeared againſt the Idolatry of the Church of *Rome*, with a conſtancy in the Matters of Religion, that has amazed all the World: the ſteps made towards that, alarmed the Nation, and this City in particular: and it appeared that you could not bear thoſe who called themſelves *the Church of God, but that are the Synagogue of Satan.* You have ſhewed alſo ſuch firmneſs to the Church of *England*, and to the Eſtabliſhed Religion, as not to bear any thing that declined from it, either to the right hand, or to the left. Yet after all this, we may have cauſe to apprehend the Wrath of God, notwithſtanding it all, if our Religion goes no farther, than the *cleanſing the outſide, or the tything the mint and aniſe.* If we have Idols in our hearts, tho we have purged our Churches of them; if we forget God at the ſame time, that we do not worſhip Images; and if while we are zealous in leſſer matters, we neglect the great things, of *righteouſneſs, mercy and faith*, then all our Negative Religion, our No Popery, and all our zeal for the Church, when it does not oblige us to conform our ſelves to her Dictates, and Rules, as well as to be hot and eager in her defence, will not ſecure us, but that this *Thou, even thou*, may belong to us.

3*dly*, The *Jews* at this time had ſo fallen from all the true Principles of Religion, that even their Religion had embittered their Spirits, ſo that they were rather the worſe for it, than the better. The Pried

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and Affectation of the *Phariſees*, that had no real worth under it to ſupport it, ſet them on all the methods of Slander and Injuſtice, of Falſhood and Cruelty: ſo that when they found they could not ſtand before the true worth of our Saviour, and his Apoſtles, they then fell upon the blackeſt Calumnies, and moſt violent Rage for deſtroying thoſe before whom they could not maintain their ground upon an equal foot: their Morals were univerſally depraved, and their Tempers ſo vitiated, that under the appearance of an adhering ſtrictly to their Religion, there never was a Nation that did more totally fall from the power and life of Godlineſs, than they did: they were both cruel and barbarous, and not ſatisfied with ſhedding the Blood of Chriſt, they filled up the meaſure of their Iniquities by perſecuting his Followers every-where: ſo that under a ſhew of preſerving their Law, they had entirely loſt all the true and good Principles of Religion; and ſo had contracted a vaſt guilt, beſides that heavy load of the Blood of him that was the Heir of the Vineyard, *whom they killed, that the Inheritance might be their own.* And thus the view of a Nation that was both ſo corrupted, and that lay under ſo heavy a load of guilt, leads us to the full importance of this, *If thou, even thou*; that even after all their Sins, and all their guilt, there was ſtill room for Repentance. If this Nation has brought it ſelf into the like ſtate of having the knowledge of the Truth, and ſeeming zealous about it, and yet falling from all that is pure and excellent in Religion, into a fierceneſs about ſome Inconſiderable Matters; if while we ſeem to have a great concern for our Religion, we have none at all for our Morals; if Malice and Ill-nature, if Fury and Cruelty, do not only tranſport us to all exceſſes, but make us cover

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and juſtify them with pretexts of Religion; if our Cities and Countrey have been defiled with all the brutalities that humane Nature is capable of; If, inſtead of mutual Love and Forgiveneſs, we hate, and ſtudy to deſtroy one another; If, inſtead of Truth, there is nothing but Injuſtice; and inſtead of Righteouſneſs, there is nothig but Violence and Deceit, then we will find our ſelves under the worſt part of that which is intimated in this, *If thou, even thou.* Yet after all, there is ſomewhat that gives comfort in this; for if a City charged with all the blood that was ſhed from *Abel* down to *Zacharias*, was even after all that, admitted to a poſſibility of eſcaping the Judgments of God, by a true Repentance, then we ſee that we who have reaſon to hope that we are not near ſo guilty as they were, are not yet quite deſperate.

2. From this, I go next to conſider the Importance of theſe words, *at leaſt in this thy day.* In Scripture this word of the *day*, or time of a Nation, ſtands in a double ſenſe: ſometimes for a *time of mercy and kindneſs, an acceptable time, and day of Salvation:* ſometimes for a day of trial, or *viſitation*, as it is in the following words. The meaning of the firſt is, that when God receives Nations into his Protection and Favour, he not being as a Man, inconſtant and changeable, does not eaſily repent of the good that he ſhews them, nor change his Methods towards them: and therefore till their Sins become ſo high, and crying, that it does not agree with the honour of his Providence not to ſhew his anger againſt them, he bears with their Offences; or, if he corrects them for them, he does it not in anger; he will chaſtiſe them, as he ſaid with relation to *David*'s Poſterity, *If they ſin againſt him, but he will not quite caſt them off; he will viſit their Tranſgreſſions with the rod, and their Iniquity*

Iſa. 49. 8. Verſ. 43.

Pſal. 89. 30, 31, 32, 33.

Iniquity with ſtripes; Nevertheleſs he will not take his loving kindneſs utterly from them. And thus we find it was often ſaid of the *Jewiſh* Nation in the *Old Teſtament*, that God would have caſt them off, if he had not remembred *Abraham*, *Iſrael* and *Jacob*; ſo in this ſenſe the *Jews* were ſtill God's People, and in Covenant with him. To them were the firſt offers of the *Meſſias* to be made; and therefore if while that Covenant laſted, and they were ſtill under the Privileges of it, they could have applied themſelves to *know the things that belonged to their Peace*, they might ſtill have maintain'd their Title to his Favour. The ſecond ſenſe of this *thy day*, imports that there is a time of Trial and Repentance granted by God, even to guilty Nations, in order to their preventing the laſt ſtrokes of his Wrath, and the final Calamity that is threatned. When God was provoked by the ſins of the old World to bring a flood upon the whole Earth, he gave them the ſpace of 120 years for a time of warning, in which *Noah* continued as a Preacher of Righteouſneſs, denouncing to them the Judgments that were to be poured out upon them: Even *Niniveh* had 40 days given to them for a time of Repentance, by which their final deſtruction might be reſpited, as in fact it proved to be. We find upon three great occaſions, that God granted to the people of the *Jews* a time of 40 Years: When they rebelled againſt him at *Kadeſh-barnea*, and would not go in and poſſeſs the Land; he declared that none of them except two, ſhould enter into it, but that they ſhould fall in the Wilderneſs; yet they were to wander in it 40 Years; for ſo long does the Pſalm ſay, *that he was grieved with that generation.* Next, when *Manaſſes* had ſo defiled *Jeruſalem* with both Idolatry and Bloodſhed, that it is ſaid that *God would not pardon*

6. Gen. 3.

3. Jonas 4.

14. Numb. 33, 34.

2 Kings 24. 4.

don it; yet upon *Joſiah's* ſerious Repentance, and purging the Temple, which he began in the 12th Year of his Reign, God granted to the *Jews* 40 Years Reprieve; for it was juſt ſo long between the 12th of *Joſiah*, and *Zedekiah's* Captivity: And the third 40 Years was from the firſt year of our Saviours Preaching, to the final Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem:* they were then in the *day of their Viſitation*, which grew gradually upon them; the *Roman* Yoke becoming every day more and more intolerable, and their humors growing more and more boiſterous. Towards the concluſion of this time of their Trial, the alarms grew higher; many Prodigies, and other extraordinary things appearing, that ſeemed to warn them of the Wrath to come. *Ceſtius Gallus* came with an Army againſt them four Years before their Deſtruction, and took the lower City; and tho he did retreat with ſome loſs, yet they had all reaſon to conclude that the *Romans* could not bear ſuch a Repulſe: After this, *Galilee* was conquer'd and deſtroy'd: All theſe were warnings to *Jeruſalem*, and were the laſt immediate Forerunners of its final Deſtruction. This being then the full extent of the meaning of theſe Words, *In this thy day*, it will not be uneaſie to ſee how they may belong to us.

It is ſtill with us a *day of mercy*; and when we conſider the whole ſtate of *Chriſtendom*, particularly of many parts of it, ever ſince the Reformation was eſtabliſhed, we muſt acknowledg that it has been of a very long continuance; we had 80 years of Peace and Plenty, Proſperity and Victory, as well as of the Purity of the Goſpel, from the year 1558, to the year 1638; a thing without example in Modern Hiſtory. In all that time, unleſs it were a few months Plague at two ſeveral times, we had not any one National ſtroke, to be ſet againſt the many publick Bleſſings we enjoyed; but when we were ſo happy that

we had no Enemies that could hurt us, we became our own Enemies, and then the Sword raged among us; but even that was ſo allayed, that we fell not under the Fury that commonly attends Civil Wars. And both Sides in their mutual Heats, did yet ſo far remember that they were Engliſhmen, that neither of them brought over Strangers, nor gave them footing among us. We have now enjoyed an Age of Peace and Plenty, and with that have had the Goſpel among us, with that clearneſs and fulneſs, that no Age has produced more Light, better Explanations of Divine Matters, and fuller Proofs of their Truth. And though we have ſeen many Storms gathering thick and black over our Heads, ſo that we had reaſon to look for moſt terrible Confuſions; yet all theſe have gone over us in ſo inoffenſive a manner, that perhaps many do not enough feel the Bleſſings of our Deliverance, becauſe we only ſaw, but did not feel what our Enemies had deſigned againſt us; and this being a thing which ſome had not Opportunities, and others had not Capacity enough to apprehend; we deſpiſe, or perhaps even loath our Deliverance; becauſe we neither value the Goſpel which is preſerved among us, nor underſtand how near we were the loſing it. The Quiet we now enjoy, and the Security we live in while, all the World about us is on fire, is no ordinary Indication of a particular favour of Heaven to us; and after ſo long a courſe of Goodneſs, we have reaſon to conclude that God will not change his Methods, if our Sins do not call aloud for it.

We have likewiſe reaſon to think we are now in a *Day of Viſitation*, and that terrible Calamities

are not far from us, if *in this our Day*, we are not wiſe nor good enough to prevent it. We have ſeen the Cup of God's Wrath, going round all the Proteſtant Churches, which having fallen from their firſt Love, and forſaken their firſt Purity, mixing into the Vanities of the World, and corrupting their Manners notwithſtanding the Purity of their Doctrine and Worſhip, have been ſeverely viſited by God: Some fatally broken and extirpated, as the Churches of *France* and *Piedmont*; others brought near utter ruin, as the Churches of *Hungary* and the *Palatinate*, and others; though not viſited ſo heavily, yet were brought very low; ſo were the Churches of the *Netherlands* 18 Years ago, and many Churches in *Germany*. But when all theſe things have been ſet before our Eyes, and when the Viſitation is brought into our *Galile*, if I may ſo ſpeak, I mean into *Ireland*, and has caſt that Iſland, and all its Inhabitants, into ſuch Convulſions, that we cannot yet form a clear Judgment how far they may be conſumed by this Fire, which now devours them, before they come out of it; While theſe things have gone round about us, why ſhould we think that we can eſcape? Are we better than the others who have ſuffered? Or, can we think that God is partial to us? And when God ſuffered them ſo far to break in upon us, that we ſaw an Idolatrous Worſhip openly, and in contempt of the Laws both of God and of the Land, ſet up among us; and an open Treaty ſet on foot for bringing us under the Tyranny of *Rome*: When we were under the Miniſtry of a Jeſuit, and the Influences of *France*; when we ſaw Breaches made upon the moſt

moſt ſacred of our Laws, and the Subverſion of the whole attempted: This was certainly ſuch a Day of Viſitation, as *Ceſtius Gallus* his ſhewing the Roman Army was to *Jeruſalem.* The *Jews* did not any more fear that Enemy, becauſe they had ſtrength enough once to ſtand it out againſt ſo faint an Attempt; but the next return of the Romans was more formidable, and proved in Concluſion fatal to them. If we either grow to have milder Thoughts of our Enemies the modern Romans, and fancy they are not quite ſo bad as our Fears may have Pictured them to us; or if we deſpiſe their Forces, and fancy that we have not ſo conſiderable an Enemy in them as we were made believe; we may be ſoon undeceived of both Errours, when it will be too late for us upon the diſcovery to correct them.

In Sum, We muſt not think that ſuch extraordinary Providences as have of late occurred both at home and abroad, are Matters that deſerve no Reflections to be made upon them: They are *Eſſays,* and perhaps the *laſt Eſſays* that are to be made upon us, to try if our Dangers, or our Neighbours Fates, can make us wiſer or better.

III. And this leads me to the third Particular, What are thoſe things which concern the *Peace of a Nation,* and how they may be *known.* The obvious Diviſion of this is unto thoſe things that belong to our Peace with God, thoſe things that may preſerve the whole Nation, and its Peace as it is a complicated Body; and the things which belong to our Peace among our ſelves, one with another.

We cannot make any Reflections on our Condition with relation to God, without obſerving that he has been offended in a moſt eminent manner; while Religion has been ſo viſibly neglected by thoſe who have pretended the moſt to it; while not only Vices of all Sorts have abounded among us, and have been acted with ſo high a Hand, as if the Actors had equally deſpiſed the Judgments of God and the Reproaches of Men; but what do I ſay, *Reproaches!* Men have been ſo far from being out of countenance for their Sins, that they have valued themſelves upon them, and gloried in them. How loud is the Cry of the Luxury, the Injuſtice, the Fraud, the Violence, and the Impieties of this Place? How have they gone up into the Ears of the Lord of Hoſts? And will he bear with us for ever? But as if the Abominations of others Age and Countries had not been enough to provoke him to Anger, we have found out and added new ones to thoſe of paſt Times. Perhaps in no Age or Nation the Religion that Men pretend to believe, has been ſo openly not only attacked and queſtioned, but laughed at and rejected with all the Indignities of impious Scorn, as it has been among us: Others who had more Modeſty and Decency in their Natures, and ſo could not riſe up to that pitch of Inſolence, yet have been generally corrupted into Infidelity; ſo that perhaps ſcarce any Nation now under Heaven believe leſs of the Religion that is profeſſed in it, than we do. Now this is as much beyond all other Sins, as High Treaſon is beyond all other legal Offences. This ſtrikes at the Majeſty and Authority of God, and at every Arti-

cle

cle of Religion, ſince it overturns the Foundation upon which all is built. And to what a height is the Cry of our Iniquities riſen, when there is ſcarce a leud Company that get together, that do not make the moſt ſolemn and ſacred things in the World, the Subjects of their Mirth and Diverſion? *Shall not I viſit for theſe things, ſaith the Lord? ſhall not my Soul be avenged on ſuch a People as this is?* Jerem. 5. 29. Beſides this that diſſolves all Senſe of Religion, this Age has produced another that has as much diſſolved all Morality, which is the open affronting the State of Marriage: Other Ages have perhaps produced high Offences againſt it, and publick Breaches of that Faith; but to ſee an open and avowed Contempt of it done in the Sight of the Sun, and as it were in ſpite of that State, is what no Chriſtian Nation has ſo publickly owned as ours has done.

Whilſt God has been ſo highly provoked, and when we ſaw our ſelves in ſuch a deſperate State, as that under which we lately groaned, who were then repenting of their Sins, and turning to God? Who were putting from them the Evil of their Ways? Who were cleanſing themſelves from their Impieties and Impurities, from their Injuſtice and Oppreſſion? Such a Preparation as this had made us both more fit for a Deliverance, and more capable of improving it to all thoſe Ends for which God had bleſs'd us with it. If this great Work ſticks in the Birth ſo long, it is becauſe Men have not repented of their Sins, but have returned to them, or rather have openly continued in them: and while our Diviſions make us ſharp-ſighted to find out one anothers Faults, we make no other uſe

uſe of the Diſcovery, but to reproach others for them, and to repreſent them more odious to our ſelves and others, upon that Acccount. But who conſiders theſe things as a Chriſtian ought to do, who animated with the Spirit of Chriſt, mourns over them, and humbles himſelf before God for them? as *Ezra* did, who finding that the People of the *Jews* after their Return out of the Captivity, were beginning to fall back into their old Diſorders, *Rent his Clothes, and ſat aſtoniſhed; he was aſhamed, and bluſhed to lift up his Face to God:* and in Words full of tender ſenſe, he laments their Sins.

Ezrah 9. 3, 4.

Ver. 8. *Now for a little ſpace Grace hath been ſhewed us, to give us a little reviving.*

Ver. 10. *And now Lord, what ſhall we ſay after this? for we have forſaken thy Commandments.*

Ver. 13. *And after all that is come upon us for our our evil Deeds, ſeeing that thou our God haſt puniſhed us leſs than our Iniquities deſerve, and haſt given us ſuch a Deliverance as this, ſhould we again break thy Commandments, wouldſt not thou be angry with us till thou hadſt conſumed us, ſo that there ſhould be no Remnant nor eſcaping? O Lord God of* Iſrael, *thou art righteous: for we remain yet eſcaped, as it is this day: Behold, we are before thee in our Treſpaſſes, for we cannot ſtand before thee, becauſe of this.* Such Acts of Sorrow as theſe, riſing from a ſenſe of the Diſhonour done to God, and of the Danger the Nation is in by it, were a Service to the Publick, beyond all that can ever riſe from that falſe Heat, with which any of us may be animated. Other Services require good Heads, or great Credit, and much Wealth; but this is that which every Perſon of a pure & devout Mind can offer up for their Country. But alas, can it be expected that thoſe who do not

Ver. 14, 15.

mourn

mourn for their own Sins, ſhould mourn for the Sins of others? which will perhaps appear an unreaſonable piece of Melancholy to thoſe who do not conſider that we being all one Body in Chriſt, the Communion of the Saints, of which this is a main part, is eſtabliſhed by God, by which we are obliged to mix our Tears and Prayers together as one Body, not doubting but that theſe have their Effect before God; at leaſt they ſhall return into our own Boſom, and our Charity ſhall not want its Reward; for though the Sins of a Nation were grown to that height, that though *Noah*, *Job*, and *Daniel*, were among them, and interceding for them, they *could only deliver their own Souls, by their Righteouſneſs*, yet ſtill that is a happy Reſerve. *Ezek.* 14. 16.

Thoſe who mourn in *Sion*, ſhall be marked on their Fore-heads: and when the deſtroying Calamity ſhall have a Commiſſion to march over the Land, *beginning even at the Sanctuary*, at that Order of Men, who ſhould have been the Interceſſors for others, but that have rather heightned the Provocation by their Sins, than thoſe who carry that Mark, ſhall be exempted, and either be quite preſerved from the common Calamity, or at leaſt ſhall have a diſtinguiſhed Fate in it, for they may hope for an eaſier Fall and gentler Circumſtances. This is then the chief thing *that belongs to our Peace*, our Reconciliation with God; ſo that he turns from the Fierceneſs of his Anger, and lifts up upon us the Light of his Countenance. *Ezek.* 9. 4, 7.

The 2*d* thing that concerns *our Peace*, is the falling upon proper and effectual Means for preſerving our ſelves, and the Nation, for this is *our Peace*.

Peace. We who have been accuſtomed to eaſe and fulneſs, who cannot bear the leſſening any one Article either of our Luxury or of our Vanity, have mean Notions of what belongs to *our Peace*, if we think that any thing is too much which ſecures it to us. We have an Enemy in head of us, who has ever looked on the Proſperity and Plenty of this Iſland, as that which ſtood moſt in the way of his *Glory:* and though he could more eaſily bear with it, when our Princes were under his Conduct, and guided by the Meaſures that he gave them, yet now Prince and People are both equally odious to him. If we have any Regard either to our Selves, our Families or Poſterities, to our Religion or our Country, to the preſent or the ſucceeding Generations, we muſt now unite our whole Strength, and turn our whole Forces againſt thoſe Enemies of Humane Nature, who whereſoever they come, turn the richeſt Soil to a barren Wilderneſs; and after they have gratified their Revenges with unheard-of and ſtudied Cruelties, their Appetites with the moſt defiling Rapes, their Avarice with the moſt exquiſite Plunder, finally deſtroy all that cannot be any way ſerviceable to themſelves. Theſe are things which we cannot eaſily believe; ſince Warrs formerly were managed by Rules, and a Faith that was held ſacred even in the hotteſt Rages of War; but thoſe Beaſts of Prey gave themſelves no Reſtraints; or if they themſelves were capable of any, yet the terrible Orders that are given them, of executing whole Nations and Provinces, leave no room for any Remnant of Humanity that is perhaps not quite extinguiſhed in them. Men of gentle and peace-

peaceful Natures cannot form to themſelves a juſt Idea of the Miſeries which muſt follow on our falling under ſuch an Enemy.

If while things are in this State, every one will look on, and fancy, That this lies on the Government, and not on himſelf; if Men will neither with their Perſons nor their Purſes contribute what is in them to our preſervation, if ſome ſmall Diſtaſtes do alienate them from one another, and from the publick; this gives us yet a more terrible Proſpect than the Jews had. For tho' they had whetted their Spirits one againſt another beyond Imagination, yet all agreed in oppoſing the Romans. And when they attacked them, they went all to their common Defence: But if we will throw up all, becauſe we cannot carry every thing, if becauſe we cannot revenge or ſubdue thoſe who differ from us, or becauſe ſome things do not pleaſe us, we come to have ſofter Thoughts of our Enemies, and imagine that we can make Terms with them and truſt them; and if ſome fancy that by reaſon of ſome Managements they have been in, their Fate will be milder, not to ſay better, this is an Error, that they will not perhaps ever ſee, becauſe they are not like to outlive it. To ſuch as can ſo deceive themſelves, I will only tell what the Pope's Legate, that commanded the Army that beſieged *Beziers*, ſaid, When, as they were going to ſtorm the Town, ſome told him, That there were many good Catholicks among the Hereticks or *Albigenſes*, and therefore askt orders what to do with them. *Kill all*, ſaid he, *God knows them that are his:* being reſolved that what ſhare ſoever, they might have in the Mercies of God, they

Raynaldus's continuation of Baronius.

ſhould have none of his. Under the Price of our being both Papiſts and Slaves, there can be no Redemption; and when they have deſtroyed with ſo much unrelenting and treacherous Fury whole Countries of their own Religion, not ſparing neither Churches nor Monaſteries, for which even ſavage Nations have had ſome regard; What can Hereticks expect from him who has vowed their deſtruction, and reckons the Perſecution that he has ſet on foot againſt them, the top of his *Glory*? If after all this, Men will not apprehend their danger, or will fancy that they can ſecure themſelves by acting in a different Intereſt, let theſe ſee if among the Proteſtants of *France*, thoſe that ſhewed at all times the moſt ſubmiſſive Compliances with all the Inclinations of the Court, found when the fatal Decree was given, any other Diſtinction than that a very few of them were ſuffered to go out of the Kingdom; and even this Cruelty was to be magnified, as an extraordinary Favour and Gratitude of the Court. We are now upon the greateſt Criſis of any Age: The greateſt that is in our Hiſtory, and much the greateſt that has been ſince the Reformation began: If we can get through this War with Succeſs and Victory, we have before us the happieſt Proſpect that any Nation can have in view; of ſecuring our own Peace and Happineſs, our Religion and our Government: And of being the Nation that ſhall give a Deliverance to *Europe*, and a Security to the Proteſtant Religion, and of ſetting Bounds to the great *Abaddon* the *Deſtroyer* and Enemy to Mankind. If we value either our own Happineſs or the Honour of our Country,

will

will we think it a heavy thing to leſſen our Expence, to cut off from Prodigality and Luxury, and reduce our ſelves to a narrow compaſs; that we may preſerve the whole, when a few Years frugality may ſupport a chargeable War; and bring us into Habits that may make the ſucceeding Peace prove a double Bleſſing to us? Can we think any thing is too much when our Religion, our Countrey, our Lives and Liberties are the price that is to be fought for: And when the Iſſue of the preſent Scene and War muſt be our Being, either the happieſt or the miſerableſt Nation upon Earth.

The Fate of *Conſtantinople* was terrible, and ought to be ſet before us: They were beſieged by the Turks, whom they knew to be a moſt cruel Enemy, and a moſt barbarous Maſter. They could hope for nothing if they fell into their Hands, but to become a prey to them: Yet they would neither aſſiſt their unfortunate Emperor with their perſons nor their Purſes. He had none to preſerve both him and them, but ſome hired Troops, who for want of pay were mutinying upon all occaſions, he coined all his own plate, even the ſacred Veſſels were not ſpared; He went in perſon among the rich Citizens, and with Tears in his Eyes, deſired their Aſſiſtance towards the preſervation of the Empire and City; but by a fatal ſtupidity, they either did not ſee their danger, or took no care to prevent it: For though there was an inconceivable treaſure found among them in the ſack of *Conſtantinople*, yet they ſeemed to take care to preſerve it all for the Enemy; and would imploy none of it.

for their own defence. This was ſuch a degree of Infatuation, that if the Hiſtorian who relates it, had not lived in the time, and had his Information from Eyewitneſſes, we could ſcarce give credit to it. God grant ſuch Examples may make us wiſe. The poor Emperor reſolved not to outlive his Glory, and ſo in a deſperate ſally that he made he fell before the Enemy, who after that found ſo faint a Reſiſtance, that they quickly carried the place and became Maſters of all that Wealth, which its former owners had ſo carefully preſerved for them.

If we had a ſute for our whole Eſtate with one that ſpared no coſt, we ſhould not out of an ill timed Frugality let him carry it, rather than be at the charge of maintaining our Right; we ſhould rather ſave it, out of every thing elſe, than let all go. Our Enemy leaves his ſubjects as well as his Enemies nothing: ſo he finds ſpoil enough to ſupport his Ambition and Luſt of Conqueſt. When then all is ſtruck at, all muſt concur in ſo juſt and ſo neceſſary a cauſe.

But I come in the laſt place to thoſe things that belong to our mutual Peace, among our ſelves: The common Peace and Safety will be ill preſerved, if we are *biting and devouring one another*; we ſhall need no Enemy to deſtroy us, if this continues, *for we ſhall be conſumed one of another*. We have nothing ſo conſpicuous in the Hiſtory of the Deſtruction of the *Jews*, as their cruel inteſtine Feuds and Wars, which made them an eaſie Prey to the *Romans*. They were at firſt divided into three great Sects, that of the *Sadduces*, who were plain Atheiſts and Libertines, that denied the being

Gal. 5. 15.

of

of Spirits, and a future ſtate, and that by conſequence could lie under no Reſtraints from their Religion. They ſtruck in to *Herod*, and afterwards fell under ſo general an *Odium*, that they grew more inconſiderable towards the end of that State. The ſecond Sect was that of the *Eſſens*, who were men of excellent Morals, and of a ſublime Piety, who retained their ancient Simplicity, they retired from the World, lived in common, at work, and in conſtant Devotion: Theſe did likewiſe diſappear, and probably they became Chriſtians, to which their holy Diſpoſitions and their ſtrict Lives did ſo much prepare them, that it is ſcarce poſſible to think that Men of ſuch Tempers could reſiſt ſuch a Religion. But the third Sect, that ſwallowed all the reſt up, was that of the *Phariſees*, of whom ſo much is ſaid in the Goſpels, that it is not neceſſary to enlarge upon their Character: They were a ſort of People that under an outward appearance of great ſtrictneſs were the falſeſt, the violenteſt, the cruelleſt, and the moſt revengeful; they were the leaſt moral, and the moſt hypocritical and diabolical Sect that ever was: Theſe, by the appearance of Exactneſs and of Zeal, had ſo *poſſeſſed* themſelves of the Opinion and the Affections of the People, that they could turn them which way they pleaſed; but among them there were Subdiviſions. The *Zealots* were thoſe who from the Example and the Rewards of *Phinehas*, came to think, that when Magiſtrates were too ſlack in puniſhing Offenders, private perſons might do it. St. *Paul* had been one of theſe, and as ſuch, he not only perſecuted the Church from Houſe to Houſe, but having got a company of Men of the ſame fury

to

to follow him, he went to perſecute them even to ſtrange Cities. Now, towards the end of the Hiſtory of the *Jews*, we ſee this became a matter of meer Rage; and Companies aſſuming this name, got together, and run about executing whatſoever their own *Fury* inſpired them with, as a revenge of Sin, in the Name of God. Theſe firſt murdered all the *Romans* every where, and ſo engaged themſelves in a War with them, that required either a moſt mighty reſiſtance, or that muſt in concluſion end in their own utter ruin: They alſo murdered all that inclined or moved at any time to treat with the *Romans*. But men of this ſort ſeldom agree long together: So theſe were ſoon ſubdivided into thoſe who were headed by *Eleazar*, who were the Maſters of the Inner Courts of the Temple; and thoſe who were headed by *John*, that poſſeſſed themſelves of the Outer Courts: And when thoſe within opened the Gates at the Feaſt of the *Paſſover*, that ſo the People might come in and offer their Lambs, ſome of *John*'s party went in, and killed *Eleazar*, and ſo he became Maſter of the whole Temple. But this was not all: for there was another party among them that were called the *Robbers*, that did the ſame thing that the Zealots did, for it is ſcarce poſſible to think they could do worſe: But it ſeems they did not cover it with the pretence of Zeal for the Law, and ſo were the more honeſt Robbers of the two; who owned that they *robbed* for *robbing* ſake. Theſe were at firſt commanded by *Manahem* the Son of *Judas* of *Galilee*; but he being killed by *Eleazar*'s means, they were after that headed by one *Simon*, who being called into *Jeruſalem*, drove

John

John out of the City, and had many Engagements with him and his *Zealots*, in one of which they burnt the common ſtore of Proviſions, which if preſerved, would have ſerved to maintain a long Siege. Thus were they fighting with one another; when *Titus* came before them with an Army that conſiſted only of four Legions, beſides Auxiliaries: a ſmall force againſt ſo vaſt a multitude of Men, of an enraged Courage, and a City of ſuch extent and defence. In this Extremity it was plain, that they muſt either treat and ſubmit, or unite and reſiſt vigorouſly: There was but one thing that was both deſperate and fooliſh, to periſh within their Walls by Hunger, and to be deſtroying one another as oft as the Enemy gave them leiſure to go about it: And this was preciſely the courſe they took. If any ſpake of treating with the *Romans*, he was preſently the Object of the common fury; yet they did not ſally out upon them till it was too late.

From the 14. of *April* that *Titus* ſate down before them, the account of thoſe that died by Famine was kept by *Mannæus*, who had the charge of carrying out the dead Bodies to the 1ſt. of *July*, and it ſwelled up to an hundred and fifteen thouſand and eight hundred: This was beſides thoſe who were carried out by their Friends. After that he fled to the *Romans*, and thoſe who were appointed ſtill to take care of the Dead, told that the number was grown up to Six hundred thouſand. And thus the greateſt, and once the beſt, but then the worſt City in the World, periſhed in ſo terrible a manner, that the Hiſtory of it would paſs for a melancholy aggravating of matters

ters beyond the poſſibilities of truth, if he that wrote it had not been an Eye-witneſs, and a perſon of ſo true a judgment, of ſo much probity, and ſo full of affection to his Country, that there is no reaſon to ſuſpect the Relation that he has made of it; which as it is by much the ſaddeſt piece of Hiſtory, ſo it is that which can never be enough read; for it will alwaies leave a very good Impreſſion upon the Reader's mind.

But this is not to be read meerly as a ſignal Tranſaction that paſs'd 1600 years ago, but as a ſtanding Monument of the ſeverity of the Juſtice of God againſt an Impenitent and Rebellious Nation: and *if theſe things were done in the green tree, what ſhall be done in the dry?* If the Seed of *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob* were ſo uſed, why ſhould others hope to eſcape, if they become guilty of the like Ingratitude? And ſince the immediate cauſe of their ruin was that mutual fury that tranſported them into the moſt extravagant Exceſſes, and which blinded them in all they did, and made them neglect the moſt obvious and certain methods for their preſervation, either in the way of treaty or of defence; what a melancholly Proſpect does this ſet before us, who have ſuch a mighty Enemy to deal with, that all our Heads, Hands, and Purſes united againſt him, will find work enough, and yet are reviving with the old and once extinguiſhed names our old animoſities, to ſo high a degree, that this puts every thing to a ſtand, even the Thoughts of good and wiſe men. It was once hoped, that all paſt Errors had been forgot, eſpecially in thoſe who in a time of danger, when they ſaw the tendency of ſome

ſome ſteps into which they had been engaged, made ſo generous a reſiſtance, and ſtand againſt the common Enemy, which ſhewed the ſincerity of their Hearts, and their firmneſs to the Religion and Laws of *England*; and that former Errors had been the effects of a too great eaſineſs to believe and to think well of others. But when this City was ſo much united in ſo noble a reſiſtance to barefac'd Popery and Tyranny; who could have thought that upon ſuch a Deliverance as we have been bleſt with, we ſhould not have improved it much further than we have done, for thoſe great ends for which we have reaſon to believe, that God has ſent it to us. If ſome years agoe, when all were under thoſe fears, out of which God has brought us, and were joyned together in that ſtruggle for our moſt holy Faith, out of which if we had not all eſcaped, we muſt all have periſhed together; any one had ſaid, that either differences of Opinion, or any former Errours would have made us fall out again, if God ſhould again have bleſt us with the return of Religion, and of our Laws in their Ancient force; he would have been looked on by all as a Melancholy Preſager of evil things. But we are now juſt in this, or rather in a worſe condition: a violent Averſion, and a mortal Jealouſie appears on all hands, we fancy we are not ſafe from one another; and by our fancying it, we render our ſelves indeed unſafe. If this ſhould have come upon us after we had got entirely out of all our difficulties and dangers, it had been bad enough; but in a ſtate of calm we could have better born ſuch Concuſſions, and ſhould have had time to look out for proper Remedies; but while we are yet in

ſo much danger, while Union is ſo neceſſary to all our common preſervation, that we ſhould now embroil our ſelves, and the Publick; as it is juſt that very madneſs which our Enemies would wiſh to us, ſo it carries in it ſo terrible a Character of God's caſting us off, and giving us up to the Counſels of our own hearts, that if by the earneſt Prayers of thoſe who mourn in ſecret, and the hearty endeavours of ſuch as are fitted for ſuch healing work, we cannot cure this Diſeaſe, we muſt give our ſelves for a loſt Nation. If Attempts this way prove unſucceſsful, then every man muſt prepare himſelf the beſt he can, to bear the ſhare that he himſelf muſt expect in the Miſeries of his Countrey. And if through our Paſſions and Follies, God does deliver us up into the hands of our Implacable Enemies, as we muſt expect that they will take care, that we ſhall never be in a condition to ſhake off the yoke again; ſo to every one whoſe paſſions have tranſported him into thoſe Exceſſes which are like to be fatal to us, the remembrance of this will be one of the moſt inſupportable Ingredients in his miſery, that he had procured it to himſelf. *O Iſrael thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelf!* will carry in it a terrible ſound, when the Application will be ſo juſt. Suffer me then in the words of St. *Paul*, to ſay, *Is there not a wiſe man among you? I ſpeak this to your reproach.* Is every Man ſo ſoured with the leaven of a Party, that he cannot ſee himſelf, or make others obſerve the tendency of all this? Were the wrongs done ſo great that they cannot be forgiven? Are the differences ſo wide that they cannot be healed? Is there no Balm in *Gilead*, and is there no Phyſician there? Have we

1 Cor. 6. 5.

no

no ſenſe of all that God has done for us? Will we quite defeat, and diſappoint it? Have we no ſenſe of God's forgiving us our many hainous ſins? Have we no regard to the great Example of the Holy Jeſus, who here mourned over that City, which was in a few days to cry out againſt him, *Crucifie, Crucifie?* And do we not conſider the unexampled gentleneſs of him whom God has ſet over us, whom perhaps ſome may think merciful to an exceſs: But it is a happy ſtate for Subjects when this is one of their chief Complaints. He to whom under GOD we owe our preſent peace and happineſs, does both by his own practice, and his advices recommend this temper ſo earneſtly to us, that if none of all theſe Conſiderations of Religion, Reaſon, Example and Intereſt can work upon us, we muſt conclude, that this is one of the heavy Judgments of God, which is already poured out upon us; that is not only heavy in it ſelf, but is chiefly heavy on this account, becauſe it will moſt certainly draw a great many heavier ones than it ſelf after it. If our differences were of ſo ſtrange a nature, that no Expedient could be offered that were proper to compoſe them, nothing in ſuch a caſe ſhould remain, but to cry out, *The wound of the Daughter of my People is greater than that it can be healed.* But as it is a ſtrange reproach to a Phyſician, if one ſhould die under his hand, of one of the ſlighteſt evils that could poſſibly affect the Body of Man; ſo to ſee the Peace of a City, or of a Nation diſturbed, not to ſay loſt, upon ſuch matters, muſt prove either that the Humours are very bad, or that the Wound has been but ſlightly cured, by thoſe who perhaps inſtead of uſing Lenitives to allay the heat, do rather inflame it. Upon

the whole matter, the right way of procuring fit Remedies to all our evils, is *to ſearch and try our ways and to turn again unto the Lord, to lift up our hearts with our hands unto God in the heavens, and to acknowledge that we have tranſgreſſed and rebelled: and that hitherto God has not pardoned: That he covered us with his anger, and himſelf with a cloud: That Fear and a ſnare is come upon us, that therefore our eye ſhould run down without any intermiſſion, till God look down and behold from heaven: And then we might ſee that God would hear our voice, and not hide his ears from our cry; that he would draw near to us in thoſe days that we call upon him, and ſay unto us, fear not: That he would plead our cauſe and redeem our life who ſees the vengeance of our Enemies, and all their imaginations againſt us; and would render them a recompence according to the works of their hands, and perſecute and deſtroy them in his anger from under the heavens.*

Lam. 3. 40.

V. 56, 57, 58.

v. 64. 66.

There remains little to be ſaid to the laſt particular that I propoſed, which is that which is implied in this period, that is in the form of a wiſh, or rather ſuppoſition: *If thou hadſt known*, and ſo it is broken off abruptly, without adding any words, that import what ſhould have followed upon it. But this is a figure natural enough to every Language, without going to ſearch for a Hebraiſm: There being ſomething in this way of expreſſion, that is ſo tender and languiſhing that it exceeds any thing that could have come to give it a more regular concluſion. In a word, it imports that all that is great or good, all that they could wiſh for or deſire, either with relation to the publick, or in their own particular, all the Preſervations and Deliverances, all the Felicities and Proſperity of a Nation, might be

be juſtly expected from ſo happy a diſcovery, and ſuch a change in their tempers; as firſt to find *out, and* know, and then to ſeek after *the things that belonged to their peace.* They could not indeed have continued to have been as they had been formerly the People of God, with the excluſion of all others; but they would ſtill have retained this priviledge that the Goſpel was to be offered *to the* Jew *firſt, and then to the* Gentiles; ſo that they would have been always the Firſt-born of the Churches of God: and if they had received the Meſſias, they might have continued to be the head of all Nations. But it was otherwiſe appointed in the wiſe and holy Councils of God, for reaſons which we do not now perfectly underſtand. This only we know, that God's rejecting them was *the calling of the* Gentiles. And indeed the tenderneſs of the expreſſion here uſed, ſeems to import this that there was no hope of this ſuppoſition's proving real: ſo the words that follow may be conſidered as the cloſing the period. I need not here enlarge to ſet before you the bleſſings that without flattering our ſelves too much, we may reaſonably expect upon our ſetting our ſelves to find out, and to purſue *the things that belong to our peace*: They are both ſo viſible in the Natural Conſequences of things, and ſo eminent and great in themſelves, that I cannot imagine how any one that loves his Religion or Countrey, himſelf, or his Poſterity, can think of them without feeling in himſelf all the emotions of joy, and all the fervency of deſire upon ſo glorious and ſo amiable a proſpect, *that we ſhall be bleſſed in the City and bleſſed in the Country, that the Lord ſhall cauſe our Enemies that riſe up againſt us to be ſmitten before our face: And that*

Rom. 11.

Deut. 28. 3, 7, 9, 10, 12.

that he ſhall bleſs us in all that we ſet our hand to, and ſhall eſtabliſh us to be a holy people to himſelf; ſo that all the people of the earth ſhall ſee that we are called by the name of the Lord, and ſhall be afraid of us, and that we ſhall lend to many Nations, and not borrow. I will not offer to you the diſmal reverſe of all this, in the Curſes that are denounced upon a people that ſhall not hearken to the Voice of the Lord, nor obſerve his Commandments to do them. I hope for better things from you, and ſuch as accompany Salvation, for which let us look up to him who can give us Grace both to will and to do, to whom be Glory and Honour for evermore. *Amen.*

FINIS.

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